

## WNCN-TV Hosts Skywarn Hurricane Orientation Training



Left:  
Mary KG4OQA  
trying out the  
"blue screen" in  
the WNCN  
weather studio.

Right: WNCN  
meteorologist  
Janice Jones  
speaks to Sky-  
warn spotters.

(See article on  
page 11.)



Photos by Denyse K4DAW and Channel 17 Crew

## ***The Exciter***

The ***Exciter*** is the monthly newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It is available in both printed and electronic form. The printed version is mailed to members just before each club meeting. The electronic form, in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, is e-mailed about a week earlier.

We solicit both articles and advertising. The deadline for submissions is first Friday of the month or Friday after the monthly meeting. Contact the Editor.

The views contained in the *Exciter* are those of the individual authors, and are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

## ***The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society***

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, we incorporated a new RARS, and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friend-ship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are \$18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay \$5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are \$12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are \$9.00 per year.

Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer, or the RARS web site ([www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)).

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RARS Repeaters in Raleigh:  
145.13 (82.5 PL)  
146.64  
224.64 (Temporarily off the air)  
444.525 (82.5 PL)

WEB SITE   [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)



## ***PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS***

It's that time again!  
Open up that closet  
and rediscover the  
treasures within --  
then share them with  
the rest of us at the  
RARS Auction!  
The fun starts  
October 5th at 7:00

PM.

I was recently amazed at what a pile of space-consuming goods went for at auction. Perhaps you'll be pleasantly surprised as well. Or, if you're like me, you'll quickly fill the void with something new -- or new-to-you.

You'll have to pardon my brevity; as you can see, it's been a busy couple of weeks at the NI4S shack!

73 de Andy NI4S

*The Exciter goes to the printer the first Monday after the general meeting. Electronic mailing is the same week. Printing and mailing may vary.*

## ***RALEIGH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MEETINGS***

**Date:**      **Every first Tuesday of the Month**  
**Location:**   **Forest Hills Baptist Church, at Dixie Trail and Clark Avenue, in Raleigh**  
**Time:**      **7:30pm. Folks start showing up a bit before 7 to chat, brag and eat donuts.**

VE Testing: The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing at the February, May, August and November RARS meetings, at the RARSfest in April, the Cary Swapfest in July and the JARSfest in November, and following RARS license classes. Please bring a photo ID and the original copy of your current license, plus any CSCEs you have for credit. Please refer to [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org) for more information.

The RARS 145.13 Repeater is waiting for YOU! PL 82.5 Tone

# Announcements

New Time  
this month  
only

**NEXT RARS MEETINGS:**  
**October 5, 2004, Special Time 7:00 pm**  
**AUCTION**  
**Meeting will be upstairs due to election**

It's time to clean out the closets of the ham equipment and sell those items no longer needed. Ham and computer equipment only. The sale will be between owner and seller, no percentage to the

## SPECIAL NOTICE

**DINNER CHANGED TO  
2ND Tuesday of the month**



### DID YOU KNOW.....

There is a dinner once a month, known as the RARS Dinner, where hams and non-hams get together to eat, socialize and become better acquainted.

Are you looking for a ham-related activity that your spouse, date, or family can participate in, even if they don't want to be an amateur radio operator? This is it. Do you want to meet interesting, likeable people in a nice environment? This is for you.

Come join us on the **2nd** Tuesday of each month. We are currently meeting in the private dining room at the Golden Corral, 6129 Glenwood Avenue. People start arriving around 6:30 P.M., and things usually wind down by 8 P.M. or so. You can come whenever it's convenient for you. This gathering is open to anyone, RARS and non-RARS members, adults and children alike. Hope to see you there.

### HELP WANTED:

**Exciter reporter is needed. Articles from all ham operators are also needed. Please contact Denyse k4daw@nc.rr.com**

### RARS MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership renewals and new membership dues can be paid at RARS meetings, online at the RARS website, or mailed to the RARS treasurer. Mail To:

Greg Seamster RARS Treasurer  
1405 Leanne Court  
Raleigh, NC 27606

RARS now accepts credit card payments online for new members and membership renewals. See the RARS website ([www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)) for more information. You can join or renew for 1, 2, or 3 years.



## Dumb Questions about Dummy Loads & SWR Meters

By Martin Brossman - KI4CFS

I read in four books about the importance of an SWR Meter and a dummy load but the information stopped there. It seemed like they cut and pasted the paragraph about these two devices from one book to the next. So I started searching the web for answers to just how you use SWR meters & dummy loads. I found out how to build them, the problems with low priced ones, which models were used to test which equipment, but very little on how to use them. So I explored the wisdom of hams on eham.net for information about using SWR meters & dummy loads that cost under \$200.00. I found the information very useful and would like to thank all the hams that contributed. You will see some redundancy in this article because I am offering different hams' perspectives on the same topic. Sometimes it helps to read something in a slightly different way to understand it. Hopefully you will find these questions and answers helpful.

Question: What is an SWR meter & a Dummy Load, and how do they work?

Allan, KA5N: The primary use of an SWR meter is to determine the amount of reflected power in an antenna system. The accuracy of inexpensive meters is relatively unimportant and 10% is good enough. Whether the SWR is 1.1:1 or 1.3:1 isn't critical. The SWR number accuracy is determined by how closely matched the measurements of the forward reading and the reverse reading are. So in any SWR meter the SWR readings should be pretty close. Where accuracy enters the picture is the forward power indicated. What if the meter reads 100 watts and the actual power is 90, 100, or 110 watts? For all practical purposes 10% accuracy is good enough. Even the best SWR meters are only about 5% accurate.

A dummy load is used to check the operation of a transmitter, and also can be used to check the SWR meter. A good dummy load should show an SWR of about 1.1:1 over its operating range. If your SWR meter suddenly shows an SWR of 5:1 on the dummy load there is a good chance either the meter or the dummy load has gone bad. If your antenna SWR suddenly changes drastically then you check it with the dummy load, and if that reading is OK then something has gone wrong with your antenna system. Tuning an antenna with a SWR meter is easy with an antenna tuner. You simply tune for lowest SWR (lowest reflected power). You can tune an antenna during installation by adjusting the length (or coil tap, or capacitor) to give low SWR over the range you intend to operate.

An SWR meter is not a laboratory instrument, and for amateur use 10% accuracy is good enough. Using the meter requires a

lot of reading of the ARRL Handbook and Antenna Book (and other information sources) and a good deal of hands-on use. Learning to diagnose problems in antenna systems from SWR readings requires a good understanding of antenna principles and logical troubleshooting.

Question: How do you accurately use SWR meters with a 10% error rate?

Ralph, K0RFD: How do you use a 10% meter accurately? You don't really need to worry about it. Ten percent isn't enough of a change in reflected power to worry about in most cases. Most meters detect the zero or near zero reflected power condition pretty well. That's really what you care about. With a cross-needle meter, I generally don't try to read the actual SWR. I just tune for minimum reflected power.

Jean, W4TYU: A meter's accuracy is usually expressed as a percentage of full scale reading (ex: 5% FS). This means that the error of any reading will be that amount in error. If full scale is 100 and the error is 5% FS, then the actual error is +/- 5 units at any reading on the meter. If the reading is 50 the actual error would be +/- 5.

Also remember that there is a difference between accuracy and precision. A reading can be precise but not accurate.

Question: How do you use an SWR meter to tune an antenna?

Ralph, K0RFD: Ideally you want to tune the antenna so that the minimum SWR is at or near the part of the band where you operate. Measure the SWR at several frequencies within the band. If you want to move the minimum SWR higher in frequency, make the antenna a bit shorter. If you want to move it down in frequency, make the antenna a little longer. This assumes that the minimum SWR occurs in a range where you are allowed to transmit. Often when you build a new antenna, it's pretty out of whack and the resonant frequency will be outside the range where you are allowed to transmit. (DO NOT TRANSMIT OUT OF BAND!) In that case, you measure the SWR at each end of the band. If the SWR is lowest at the lowest frequency of the band, chances are your antenna is too long; make the antenna a bit shorter and see if the minimum SWR is within the band. If the lowest SWR is at the high frequency end of the band, make the antenna a bit longer, again hoping you can get the true minimum inside the range where you can transmit. This is just a rule-of-thumb -- sometimes you can't really tell. In that case, borrow an antenna analyzer or receiver noise bridge from somebody and find where the resonant frequency REALLY is.

Question: How do you use the SWR meter with a dummy load?

*Continued on page 9*



## LOOKing Back 30 Years

*Taken from the September 1974 Exciter*

An FM/Repeater convention will be combined with the 3rd annual RARS Hamfest in April 1975. It was decided that the RARS Hamfest committee and executive board should consider the idea.

A new repeater is coming to Eastern North Carolina. A 2 meter RM repeater will be located at Greenville one the WNCT-TV, Channel 9 tower. A new GE Master repeater and Phelps-Dodge cavities and antennas have been ordered with shipment expected in the near future. The repeater will be operated under the supervision of amateurs who work at WNCT-TV with several control stations in the Greenville area..



## LOOKing Back 10 Years

*Taken from the September 1994 Exciter*

A comprehensive membership directory on the entire RARS membership is being put together. A questionnaire will be given to each member for filling out and returning to the club meeting or sent. The 444.95 repeater is operations and has an open autopatch. The .64 went off the air on Sunday evening, July 17 as a result of a lightning strike. The antenna, which was destroyed, was replaced and the machine was back on the air by Monday afternoon.

## RARS NEW MEMBERS

### August 2004

We would like to welcome our new members to RARS. Thank you for considering us for your amateur radio club.

Rex Noel, KI4GNA

**146.88 145.39, 147.105, & 147.135 Repeaters are supported by PCRN if you would like to donate please make checks to:**

**PCRN  
PO Box 12734  
Raleigh, NC 27605**

**More info at [www.pcrn.net](http://www.pcrn.net)**

### HAMFEST CALENDAR

|                                         |                    |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| October 10*                             | Maysville, NC      |
| October 23                              | Sumpter, SC        |
| October 30                              | Myrtle Beach, SC   |
| November 13                             | Gastonia, NC       |
| <b>November 21 Benson, NC- JARSFEST</b> |                    |
| December 4                              | Gastonia, NC       |
| February 5, 2005                        | Charleston ARS, SC |
| March 6                                 | Kinston, NC        |
| March 12-13                             | Charlotte, NC      |
| <b>April 17th</b>                       | <b>RALEIGH, NC</b> |
| May 21*                                 | Williamston, NC    |
| May 28*                                 | Durham, NC         |



Courtesy of the SERA Repeater Journal  
\*Date is not confirmed

## Minutes of the RARS Board Meeting

July 20, 2004

The RARS board meeting was held at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on Tuesday, July 20, 2004. Members present were W8HYD, K4RLC, KG4PFA, K4HF, K4HM, KG4RMT, KN4AQ, KE4PAX, K4DAW, K4FIJ, and W4BRB.

Vice President Dick Bitner, W8HYD, called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

The minutes from the June board meeting were presented, amended and approved.

### Officers' Reports

Treasurer's Report (KE4PAX): There were 279 members as of June 30, 2004, 200 of which have renewed.

Vice President's Report (W8HYD):

A series of classes will start in August for Technician and General Class licenses pending sufficient demand.

The July RARS program will feature John Van Pelt of Central Carolina Skywarn. His topic will be tornadoes.

Committee Reports

FM committee (KA2FWC): No report

Exciter (K4DAW): A reporter is needed for the Exciter.

Net Manager (KG4OQA): In absence of KG4OQA, Denyse Walter, K4DAW, reported that everything is fine with the net.

Web Master (W4NOT): No report

Membership (K4DAW): Membership cards will be given upon request. Welcome letters will be mailed to new members. Greg Seamster, KE4PAX, reported that membership renewals are ahead of where they were last year.

Hamfest (K4HM): Hank Montgomery reported that the RARSfest 2005 date conflicts with the Home Show. RARSfest will move to the third weekend in April.

Field Day (N4HAF): In absence of N4HAF, Chuck Littlewood, K4HF, reported that RARS did well at Field Day. He said that a good time was had by all, that the food was great, and that the turn-out was equal to that of last year. Denyse Walter, K4DAW, indicated that she would like to be an assistant to N4HAF for Field Day 2005.

Public Information (KN4AQ): An article on amateur radio and BPL will appear in The News and Observer. Help is needed for the ARRL news hour.

Education (K4RLC): The Hurricane Fair went well and was covered by Channel 14.

VE Team (WA4GIR & KO4CK): In absence of WA4GIR and KO4CK, Dick Bitner, W8HYD, reported that approximately 20 people tested at the Cary Swapfest.

Public Service (K1RCB): No report.

ARRL Liaison (K4HF): ARRL members may receive the ARRL weekly newsletter by E-mail. Members may subscribe by going to [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org).

Nominating Committee (K4HF): No report

W4DW/W4RNC Trustee (AC4ZO): No report

At-Large Directors (WA9SZL, K4FIJ & KG4RMT): Nothing

to report.

Special or Ad Hoc Committees: No report.

### Unfinished Business:

On motion by Chuck Littlewood, K4HF, and seconded by Jim Walter, K4FIJ, the board voted for the president of RARS to create an ad hoc committee to conduct an annual financial review and to present a financial statement to the board at the June meeting.

Greg Seamster, KE4PAX, reported on the delivery of the Exciter.

In response to a question asked by At Large Director, John Mayfield, WA9SZL, during the June board meeting about a club picnic, it was decided that this kind of event should not be pursued due to liability concerns.

### New Business:

Dick Bitner, W8HYD, suggested that there be greeters at the door to welcome visitors and new members. The Membership Committee will organize greeters.

Greg Seamster, KE4PAX, reported that the club roster is on the website, and that an updated roster will appear in the November Exciter.

On motion by Jim Walter, K4FIJ, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Virginia Enzor, KG4PFA, Secretary

## NET REPORTS FOR AUGUST 2004

**8:00PM DAILY: RARS Evening Net**

**Participants 503  
Traffic 34/30  
Time 846 minutes  
Sessions 31**

**8:30PM SAT: Tech & Traders Net  
9:00PM MON: SWL/SIG**

**Participants 61  
Traffic 0/0  
Time 499 Minutes  
Sessions 9**

## It's Never Too Late

By: Joe Squashic ( W4TTO )

That's my motto today, "It's Never Too Late" to become an amateur radio operator. I often ask myself why did I wait so long to get into this wonderful hobby. I can probably come up with several reasons in an attempt to convince myself, like focusing on starting a family, a career, and other time consuming interests. All good reasons I'm sure but nothing that should have kept me completely away from ham radio since I have had a passion for it all my life. Nonetheless, I'm in this hobby now and I'm here to stay.

My interest in radio began when I was quite young, somewhere around the year 1960. I remember one day while visiting relatives with my parents and being bored because there were no other children around, my uncle handed me his Zenith Trans-Oceanic shortwave radio to listen to and keep myself entertained. Wow! What were those strange sounds and voices I was hearing? Where were they coming from? That was probably the start of my fascination and interest in radio.

As a teenager in 1965, I got into CB radio. Back in the early days of CB, most operators abided by the FCC's Part 95 Rules and Regulations. In fact, CB radio back then was somewhat similar to today's 2-meter activity. My interest in that form of radio diminished after a couple of years and eventually I dropped out all together when it began to get chaotic where people stopped using call signs and basically ignored most of the rules and regulations. After CB, I dabbled in and out of shortwave radio and scanners between 1977 until present. Both provide great interest and enjoyment but lacked one element, two-way interaction. That's where amateur radio comes in, having the opportunity to converse with others that share a common interest. The opportunity to meet new people that speak the same language, radio. The opportunity to get involved with several organizations and community functions if one so desires. It's a great hobby for all ages. So, why did I wait so long? That's still a difficult question to answer but I'm in it today and glad I'm here. With that, I'll say 73 and this is W4TTO, standing by.....

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## MINUTES OF THE RARS GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

The monthly meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held at Forest Hills Baptist Church on Tuesday, September 7, 2004. The meeting was called to order at 7:40pm by President Andy Peterson, NI4S

The following visitors were recognized and welcomed: Rex KI4GNA, Rob KI4BK, Kevin N8VNR, and Steve KE4HFA.

Special guest Tom Wells of the Cub Scouts. Mr. Wells spoke about the upcoming Cub Scout "Cuboree" to be held at Carter-Finley Stadium on Sept 24-26. Approximately 5,000 Cub Scouts and family members will be camping at this event, and taking part in many activities. Mr. Wells invited the Club to take part by setting up a field station to demonstrate the wonders of amateur radio. Tim Buehlmann W4TIM volunteered to set up a station and invited other Club members to participate with him. Anyone else who may wish to take part can email Andy Peterson NI4S at NI4S@arrl.net.

Treasurer's Report (Greg KE4PAX): There are currently 219 members

Announcements (by NI4S):

The monthly RARS dinner is being moved from the 4th Tuesday to the 2nd Tuesday of each month, starting Sept 14th. This is to accommodate the Triangle East Amateur Radio Association (TEARA), who conduct their meetings on the 4th Tuesday each month.

The October RARS meeting will feature our annual auction, and will be held upstairs in the church starting at 7pm (doors open at 6pm).

Dick Bitner W8HYD asked for someone to volunteer to be the auctioneer at the October auction.

Program: W8HYD introduced Bob Breyer K1RCB, who conducted a State Fair Red Cross volunteer training session. This training is required of all who volunteer to be radio operators at the Fair.

Door prizes won by: WB4DCM, KG4RMT, and KI4BKE.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm. Respectfully submitted by Jim Walter K4FIJ, acting Secretary.



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Centrally located in the heart of the Triangle!



relax; **docu**source it.



*Continued from page 4 Dummy Loads*

Mark, K5LXP: Using an SWR meter with a dummy load is a good way to test cables. Obviously, a dummy load should always present close to a 1:1 match, so you won't be testing the SWR. But if you DO measure a mismatch while using a dummy load, the cable or connectors may be suspect.

N8UZE: Another use of the dummy load that applies to modern radios is adjusting the mike gain. Instead of doing this on the air, you can do it transmitting into the dummy load.

Question: How do you use a SWR meter/dummy load to determine if your feed line is good or bad?

Ralph, K0RFD: Connect the dummy load directly to the meter and measure the SWR. It should (ideally) be 1:1 or close. Then connect one end of the feed line to the meter and the other end to the dummy load. If the SWR is very high, then chances are the feed line, one of the connectors, or (most commonly) one of the solder joints in the connector is bad. Basically, you are just taking the antenna out of the equation and measuring the SWR of a known impedance with and without the feed line in the system.

Question: How does an SWR meter tend to go bad, and how would you know if it did?

Mark, K5LXP: A second meter is handy to have around to compare readings against, and is inexpensive. The dummy load and known mismatch standards are good means of finding a bad meter. The way most SWR meters work, it's not often they suddenly give inaccurate readings. Most often they will fail completely in one direction or the other due to bad diodes.

Question: What is the relationship between SWR and field strength (radiating energy)?

Martin, KI4CFS: SWR does NOT tell you how much radiating energy is coming from your antenna. For the most part, SWR is relevant only when transmitting and represents the amount of power coming back into the radio. Of course, you do not want a lot of power coming back into the radio because this would not be an efficient transfer of energy, could cause a strain on the 'finals' (components) of your radio, and also may increase RF in the Ham Shack. However, low SWR does not mean you're transmitting a strong signal. For example, a dummy load transmits almost nothing because it is converting all the electrical energy into heat and measures a low (usually 1:1) SWR. Without something that is testing the actual radiating energy from the antenna, and how it changes with changes in SWR, you are not getting a total picture.

Question: What is the difference between the Peak Envelope Power (PEP) and Average Power?

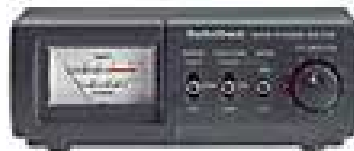
Dee, N8UZE: As you talk into a microphone on sideband, the amount of power output will vary as you talk. Most meters will give you an average power reading. The reading on this type of meter will be and should be less than the max capability of your radio. If it reads full power then you are overdriving the radio and splattering all over the band. If you have a meter that reads Peak Envelope Power instead, it will jump up to max at the points where your voice is max. On FM, AM, and CW both types of meters will give the same reading as it will read the carrier for these modes. It generally takes a powered meter to accurately read PEP.

Question: Are there other test tools worth having, or having access to (barrowing)?

Martin, KI4CFS: From hams I talked to on the radio the other test tools that seem worth having are a volt-ohm meter, an antenna analyzer, a field strength meter, and a frequency counter. An antenna analyzer hooks directly to the antenna and gives you information about your antenna without having to use or endanger your radio. The field strength meter measures the relative strength of RF that is radiating out of your antenna. The frequency counter tells you the frequency that is dominant in its environment (which would be your antenna, if it's radiating well). Finally, the volt-ohm meter is used to measure AC & DC voltage, and DC resistance.

I want to thank all the good natured hams that contributed to the information in this article. I hope others find this information as useful as I have. This is a wonderful hobby where both mentoring and community support are richly alive! I truly feel more confident about using my SWR meter from the comments I received.

Author: Martin Brossman, KI4CFS. He can be reached at: [KI4CFS@toinquire.com](mailto:KI4CFS@toinquire.com), (919) 847-4757 and his Ham resource page is: [www.toinquire.com/ham](http://www.toinquire.com/ham)



80-10 Meter 3 range power meter and SWR bridge

## **The 64 on 64 Award**

**By Virginia Enzor NC4VA**

Thinking about re-doing the decor in your shack? Forget Sorrell's and Home Depot, and consider hanging new wallpaper – the prestigious 64 on 64 Award! It's a RARS sponsored, 2-meter award within the grasp of any persistent ham. Simply make contact with 64 different stations on the 146.640 repeater, and you'll earn that new piece of wallpaper.

Fancy up your certificate with an endorsement for contact with 64 different RARS members and further endorsements with additional multiples of 64. Keep a list of the dates, times, call signs, first names, and RARS membership status. When you're finished, turn your log sheet in to RARS Award Manager Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO. You will receive your 64 on 64 Award at a future RARS meeting. You do not have to be a RARS member to participate.

First learning of this award at the RARS February 3rd meeting, I got to work on it right away. It was such fun! By March 8th, I made my 64th contact when I spoke with Kelly Andrews, KD4EWG. I thought I was finished, but then I looked at my numbers. I only needed 23 more RARS members for an endorsement! So, I continued, and by June 9th, I had made contact with 64 different RARS members – the magic 64th one being Liz Stanley, KF4UQZ. I thought I was finished, but then I looked at my numbers. I had made 107 contacts. With just 21 more QSOs, I could earn another endorsement! I finally stopped on June 30th with 134 different QSOs. I had to – I was running out of paper!

Along the way, some interesting things happened. Driving home from a February Skywarn Advanced Training meeting, I remarked on the radio that I was working on the 64 on 64 Award. Immediately there was a pile-up, something unexpected on a 2-meter repeater! In the pile-up was Pete Thacher, N4HQZ, former president of RARS. He mentioned that during his term, the award was originated to increase activity on the 146.640 repeater and to encourage new hams to talk. The original award was called the W4DW/R Activity Award, and Pete's wife added calligraphy to the first certificates. Recipients of the award attended an annual awards night to receive their wallpaper. If they were not members, they were extended an invitation to join. Obviously, the award accomplished its purposes – just listen to the activity on the repeater today!

Here are some tips for completing the award should you decide to pursue it.

- ♦ Use an Excel spreadsheet to keep a log of your contacts. By sorting callsigns alphabetically, you can easily eliminate duplicate contacts. You can also sort your contacts quickly by RARS membership status. If you don't have Excel, don't despair; just use paper and pencil.
- ♦ If you have a mobile radio in your car, carry pencil and paper with you to copy down information. It's easier to be prepared than to scrounge around for anything to write on or to rely on your memory. I'm sure I lost a few notes that I had written on grocery store receipts.
- ♦ Announce on the RARS 8:00 p.m. net that you are seeking the award. Hang around after the net, and a pile-up will occur! People will be eager to help you with this award; be ready to copy.
- ♦ Listen at commuter times in the morning between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. and in the evening from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Both times are good for picking up contacts.
- ♦ Listen for callsigns on Saturdays. Often people traveling on I-40 will monitor the 64 repeater. Some of these will make for your most interesting conversations.

Good luck to you as you go after this award. It will be a handsome addition to the shack. I can't wait to hang up my new wallpaper!

**The Central Carolina  
Skywarn Net Meets  
Tuesdays at 9:15 PM  
on 146.88 Repeater**



## **SKYWARN DINNER**

The Skywarn dinner is September 26, 2004 at Golden Corral on Glenwood Avenue at 6:00. Please join us for discussions on weather and hurricanes. Discussion from John VanPelt on his excursions with hurricanes will be the topic.

**NEW TIME!!**



On August 29, 2004, the Skywarn meeting was filled with information from Jeff Orrock, severe weather meteorologist at the Raleigh National Weather Service office. Discussion of hurricane Charlie and Frances was the topic of the evening.

### **WNCN-TV17 Hosts Skywarn Hurricane Orientation Training**

By Jim Walter K4FIJ

Members of Central Carolina Skywarn participated in a Hurricane Orientation Training session hosted by WNCN-TV17 and the Raleigh office of the National Weather Service. The WNCN Assistant News Director gave a warm welcome that included many positive comments about the value of Skywarn spotters during severe weather. Jeff Orrock, major storm meteorologist at the NWS, then gave a very informative presentation about the factors that go into forecasting hurricane tracks and intensity, with emphasis on recent Hurricane Alex and Tropical Storm Bonnie. Janice Jones, Chief Meteorologist at WNCN, spoke about the local aspect of weather and storm forecasting, which included an extensive tour of the WNCN weather studio facilities. Janice was very generous with her time, demonstrating the technology she uses to prepare her daily forecasts. One aspect of the tour that provided a bit of fun was a demonstration of the Chromakey system. When Janice is on the air giving her weather report as part of the WNCN news program, what appears as weather maps and other information behind her is actually a solid blue wall. The visible information is electronically added during the program and Janice must watch monitors in front of her and at both sides while doing her report. Several Skywarn guests were given the opportunity of "trying out" in front of the camera, which led to many comments about how it isn't as easy as it may sometimes look. The session was entertaining and informative, and contributed to the continuing cooperation between Central Carolina Skywarn, the NWS, and local news organizations.



WNCN-TV17  
Control room



Denyse  
K4DAW is  
standing in front  
of the green  
Chromakey  
screen, but on  
the TV you see  
the weather map  
showing a cold  
front.

Photos by Jim K4FIJ and Denyse K4DAW

### WNCN-17 Hurricane Orientation Training

Channel 17 Meteorologist Janice Jones explains how the weather is presented on TV broadcasts.



Central Carolina Skywarn Spotters. L to R: Mary KG4OQA, Selene KG4RMT, Hank K4HM, John K4JVP, Bob WX4MMM, Rick AJ9AF, Jim K4FIJ

